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The Minnesota winter can't stop them: Minneapolis receives the Gold-level Bicycle Friendly Community designation

The best biking cities of the East race toward Gold: Boston, New York City and Washington, D.C. all receive Silver-level designations

Washington, DC – April 30, 2011 – The League of American Bicyclists announced the latest round of [Bicycle Friendly Community](#) (BFC) designations today to kick off May as [National Bike Month](#). This was one of the strongest groups of applicants we've seen with a lot of solid projects and programs from communities all across the country – from 1,200 people in Sisters, Ore. to more than 8 million in New York City. Twenty-one communities received awards, out of 45 new applicants. Minneapolis, Minn. earned a gold-level award, the highest award of this round. “We are thrilled to see Minneapolis reach a gold-level Bicycle Friendly Community designation,” said Bill Nesper, director of the League’s Bicycle Friendly America Program. “The city’s great investments in bike lanes, bicycling safety education, and encouragement programs have paid off for its residents. In fact, communities across the country are now looking at Minneapolis as a model.”

Under the leadership of Mayor R.T. Rybak, Minneapolis was first designated as silver-level BFC in May 2008. “We’ve made a deliberate effort to be one of the nation’s top bicycling cities, and those investments mean we have more and more ways for people to commute and experience the city on two wheels,” said Mayor Rybak. Thanks to the city’s efforts, Minneapolis has doubled its number of bicycle commuters over the last nine years, placing it behind only Portland, Ore. among the largest cities in the U.S.—no small feat for a city with a notoriously harsh winter.

East Coast Cities Earn Silver Designations and Race to Gold

To date the Eastern United States has had very few silver-level Bicycle Friendly Communities and no gold-level BFCs. That’s beginning to change. Today, the League of American Bicyclists gave Boston, New York City, and Washington, D.C. silver- BFC designations. The cities are now competing to be the first to earn gold.

Since Mayor Thomas Menino launched Boston Bikes in 2007, the city has added 38 miles of facilities and has seen a spike in bicycle ridership. Bicycle commuting grew by 125 percent between 2005 and 2009 – and is at a level four times the national average. In 2010 alone, Boston installed 20 miles of bike lanes, incorporating numerous best-practices like cycle-tracks, bike boxes, colored bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, and special treatments over trolley tracks and at high-crash intersections. With 29 pre-existing miles of multi-use paths, the network now totals nearly 67 miles. All this helped Boston earn silver in its very first BFC application.

New York City has long been known for innovation and it is now applying that spirit to promoting bicycling. Under the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation, Janette Sadik-Khan, the city

has made great strides since their 2004 honorable mention and 2007 bronze award. “Moving the needle on bicycling in a city the size of New York City is nothing short of remarkable, and the city is one of the very few that has jumped two award levels,” said Andy Clarke, president of the League of American Bicyclists. “With the imminent arrival of bike sharing and the continued expansion of the bikeway network, Gold is not far away.” New York City developed an in-depth crash analysis, distributed 45,000 copies of the BikeSmart Guide to Cycling, and built an unprecedented amount of new and innovative bicycle facilities. In 2010, the NYCDOT installed more than 50 miles of bike infrastructure citywide, including protected on-street bicycle paths on First and Second Avenues, Columbus Avenue and Prospect Park West. The city has a nation-leading 500 miles of bike lanes.

Washington, D.C. first received a Bronze BFC award in 2004. Over the last seven years, it unveiled several signature projects including buffered bike lanes on Pennsylvania Avenue connecting the White House and the Capitol Building, a world-class bike parking facility, Bikestation, and the largest public bike sharing system in the country. These major projects are supported by an extensive bicycling education and encouragement program for children and adults. Washington now has the highest share of bicycle commuters of any major city on the East Coast.

To date, the League of American Bicyclists has received 452 applications and designated 179 Bicycle Friendly Communities in 44 states. The BFC program recognizes communities that promote bicycling and provides technical assistance in the form of a roadmap to help cities build great communities for bicycling. The League has identified projects, policies, programs and plans that most effectively improve cycling conditions and make up the foundation of a bicycle-friendly community. All of these bicycle-friendly elements are clearly described in the League’s [*Bicycle Friendly America: The Blueprint*](#). Communities are using these building blocks. Standout communities that moved from previous BFC Honorable Mentions to an award-level this round include: Des Moines, Iowa; Harrisonburg, Va.; Hilton Head Island, S.C.; Las Cruces, N.M.; Norman, Okla.; Northampton, Mass., and Tybee Island, Ga.

2011 Spring Bicycle Friendly Community Winners

21 communities are awarded the BFC designation for the first time:

Silver Level

- Boston, Mass.
- Sisters, Ore.
- Hilton head Island, S.C.

Bronze level

- Athens & Clarke County, Ga.
- City & County of Juneau, Alaska
- Northampton, Mass.
- Cupertino, Calif.
- Kansas City, Mo.
- Raleigh, N.C.
- Des Moines, Iowa
- Keene, N.H.
- Sedona, Ariz.
- Eau Claire, Wis.
- Las Cruces, N.M.
- Somerville, Mass.
- Fresno, Calif.
- Los Altos, Calif.
- Tybee Island, Ga.
- Harrisonburg, Va.
- Norman, Okla.
- Wilmington, N.C.

*Ten communities successfully renewed their designation and three moved up to higher designations

Gold

- Minneapolis, Minn.*

Silver

- New York, N.Y.*
- Washington, D.C.*

Bronze

- Lexington & Fayette County, Ky.
- Mesa, Ariz.
- Roswell, Ga.
- Shawnee, Ks.
- South Sioux City, Neb.

Spring 2011 Honorable Mentions

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| • Apple Valley, Minn. | • Gahanna, Ohio | • Troy, Ohio |
| • Carson City, Nev. | • Huntsville, Ala. | • Tuscaloosa, Ala. |
| • Chula Vista, Calif. | • Mankato / North Mankato, Minn. | • Warrenton, Ill. |
| • Cottonwood, Ariz. | • Onalaska, Wis. | • Wilmington, Del. |
| • Elmhurst, Ill. | • Peachtree City, Ga. | • South Windsor, Conn. |
| • Fernandina Beach, Fla. | • Rosemount, Minn. | • Windsor, Calif. |
| • Frederick, Md. | | |

About the Bicycle Friendly America Program

The Bicycle Friendly Community, Bicycle Friendly State, Bicycle Friendly Business and Bicycle Friendly University programs are generously supported by program partners Bikes Belong and Trek Bicycle's One World, Two Wheels Campaign. To learn more about building a Bicycle Friendly America, visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/>

The League of American Bicyclists promotes bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation, and works through advocacy and education for a bicycle-friendly America. The League represents the interests of America's 57 million bicyclists, including its 300,000 members and affiliates. For more information or to support the League, visit www.bikeleague.org.

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